

THE
Good-wives
LAMENTATION:
OR,
The Womens
COMPLAINT
On the Account of their being
To be BURIED
IN
WOOLLEN.

With Allowance.

L O N D O N : Printed for L. C. 1678.

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Wonderful are the Impressions which the Tyranny of *Custom* makes in weak minds: whatsoever is different from the fashions that we have been conversant with, we count *barbareus* or *monstrous*. Amongst the *Romans*, the common way of disposing the Dead Bodies of their Friends, was, to *Burn* them, and preserve their ashes in Urns: but would not he be voted an *Inhumane villain* by a Female Parliament, that should serve his Father or his Wife so now amongst us? and yet certainly that way is more *Noble*, and more *Neat*, to commend them to the *Fire*, the most excellent to the Elements, Enemy to putrefaction and stench, Neighbour to Heaven it self, and an emblem of Immortality, or shadow of Divinity, rather than

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to the *Earth*, which is the sink of the World, and Mother of Corruption, there to be devoured by *Worms*, the extreamest indignity and affront that can be offered to Humane Nature. But waving this, as relishing too much of the Paradox, with what a peevish and obstinate simplicity people are wedded to their little old frivolous Customs, can scarce appear in any thing more, than upon the late most necessary and profitable Act for *Burying in Woollen*, whereby not onely our Woollen Manufacture is encouraged, but a vast quantity of Linnen heretofore idly buried in the Earth, will by this means be preserved for *making of Paper at home*, a Commodity much wanted, and consequently on a double account, a very considerable advantage accrue to the Nation. Now what could in it self be more indifferent, than whether the Dead were wrapt in Linnen or Woollen? and yet not a few ignorant people seem almost as much troubled and concerned at it, as if they were sentenc'd to be *Buried alive*, or have their Bodies *Gibbitted* after they are dead.

'Twas the other day at a *Gossiping* that I over-heard a whole Conclave of Good-wives condoling with each other on this lamentable occasion; and had not the Cordial *Burnt Claret* supported their Spirits, o my conscience half of them had swooned away at the very thoughts of it. Twice had the *refreshing Bowl* gone round, and
unlocks

unlocks every Tongue, when a discreet Matron with a deep sigh cryed out, *Alas, and well a day!* did I ever think to live to see my self Buried in Woollen? your Husband, Neighbour Tattlewell, had a happy turn, and 'twas very discreetly done of him to Dye before this Antichristian Law came forth; and really I wish with all my heart my Husband had done so too, for I shall never endure to see him Trussed up in Woollen, and yet I would suffer as much as any good Christian Woman can bear, to be fairly rid' of him. Truly Neighbour, says Mrs. Prate-a-pace, that fate by, My Good Man always loved clean Linnen, and though I say it, had as much dexterity in the use of it too, as another Man, yet I am resolved (though I sequest for it when he is gone) to forfeit the five-pound penalty, rather than he shall travel so long a Journey as into the other World like a Beggar, without a Shirt to his back: if we must make a Banquet for Worms, why should not we allow the poor Creatures Napkins and Table-linnen at their Dinner? I am sure their fare is not so sweet nor cleanly, but they may have occasion to wipe their chaps after it. For my part, says a third, I have the tenderest skin in the World; if I do not wear Silk-Stockings and Holland-smocks of twenty shillings an Ell, all my flesh is blistered; and if they should offer to Case me in Wollen, I should never lye at quiet in my Grave: can they imagine I can sleep, (and so long too) without a Sheet? 's bodikins thin enough to put

a delicate Constitution as mine is, out of conceit with Dying, to be used thus; and I tell you plainly, the thoughts of a Flannel-shirt are so odious to me, that I'll never Dye at all rather, if I can help it. What shall become of our Wedding smocks, laid up like sacred Reliques, and Head gear provided for this purpose, with the finest Laces we can get, as if we intended our Pride should survive our Bodies, and defie Mortality, or tempt the Devil to be kind to us if we should happen into his Company? Oh fie, (quoth an old Woman that sat mumping in a corner like an Ape eating of Brawn) pray do not talk of the Devil; the Lord bless us, I defie him and all his Works; but as for being Buried in Wedding-smocks, I like it well, for 'tis probable we shall be very Melancholy then, and they do strangely refresh ones memory with pleasant thoughts: I have Seven of them, (praised be Heaven) and I intend to be Buried in them all, one o'th, top o'th, other; and if besides they will wrap me up in Flannel, Broad-cloth, or Drap de Berry, I shall be obliged to them, for I am somewhat Antient, and apt to catch Cold, and the Grave's a scurvy damp Lodging: and more over-----

But here she was interrupted by Mrs. Tabitha Lipzeal, the most demure Precisian in the Parish, who having screwed her face into the Geneva Print, opened her Mouth, and said, *Verily, verily, beloved*

beloved Sisters, 'tis a lamentable thing, yea, a thing to be lamented, and my Bowels yere within me like a red-hot oven, to consider it; there is Idolatry in the bottom of it, yea, I say, flat and plain Idolatry: I have five pretious Babes at home, and as sweet lovely Babes they be, as any within five and twenty Miles of them, and yet one of them is visited with a Chincough, but I would as soon Sacrifice any of them to Moloch, as to give him or her, Male or Female, (as the Text saith) The Burial of an Ass, or wrap their mortified Members in Welch Abominations: I am confident (as they say) yea I am sure and certain, 'tis a Popish Device, a meer Innovation in Discipline, a Jesuitical Trick, to make us do Pennance after we are Dead; and therefore I do, and will ever stedfastly desie it, and, come Life come Death, will never suffer my self to be conformable to the Traditions of Men, or desile my outward Tabernacle by being Buried in Woollen, whilst I have a day to breathe.

The sense of this notable Speech, and the zeal wherewith she delivered it, together with the moistening operation of the Burnt-wine, edified all the Company into so Mandlin a condition, that they

they wept out of measure; and to prevent an Inundation of Grief, where glad to be led home, staggering under the weight of their afflictions, to their respective dwellings.

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